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With an Etching by JAMES COLLINSON.

The Germ:

Thoughts towards Nature

In Poetry, Literature, and Art.

When whoso merely hath a little thought
Will plainly think the thought which is in him,—
Not imaging another's bright or dim,
Not mangling with new words what others taught;
When whoso speaks, from having either sought
Or only found,—will speak, not just to skim
A shallow surface with words made and trim,
But in that very speech the matter brought:
Be not too keen to cry—"So this is all!—
A thing I might myself have thought as well,
But would not say it, for it was not worth!"
Ask: "Is this truth?" For is it still to tell
That, be the theme a point or the whole earth,
Truth is a circle, perfect, great or small?

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To Correspondents.

All persons from whom Communications have been received, and who have not been otherwise replied to, are requested to accept the Editor's acknowledgments.

James Collinson 1850.

Ex ore infantium et lactentium perfecisti laudem.

The Child Jesus.

A Record typical of the five Sorrowful Mysteries.

"O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow."—
Lamentations i. 12.

I. The Agony in the Garden.

JOSEPH, a carpenter of Nazareth,
And his wife Mary had an only child,
Jesus: One holy from his mother's womb.
Both parents loved him: Mary's heart alone
Beat with his blood, and, by her love and his,
She knew that God was with her, and she strove
Meekly to do the work appointed her;
To cherish him with undivided care
Who deigned to call her mother, and who loved
From her the name of son. And Mary gave
Her heart to him, and feared not; yet she seemed
To hold as sacred that he said or did;
And, unlike other women, never spake
His words of innocence again; but all
Were humbly treasured in her memory
With the first secret of his birth. So strong
Grew her affection, as the child increased
In wisdom and in stature with his years,
That many mothers wondered, saying: "These
Our little ones claim in our hearts a place
The next to God; but Mary's tenderness
Grows almost into reverence for her child.
Is he not of herself? I' the temple when
Kneeling to pray, on him she bends her eyes,
As though God only heard her prayer through him.
Is he to be a prophet? Nay, we know
That out of Galilee no prophet comes."

But all their children made the boy their friend.

Three cottages that overlooked the sea
Stood side by side eastward of Nazareth.
Behind them rose a sheltering range of cliffs,
Purple and yellow, verdure-spotted, red,
Layer upon layer built up against the sky.

In front a row of sloping meadows lay,
Parted by narrow streams, that rose above,
Leaped from the rocks, and cut the sands below
Into deep channels widening to the sea.

Within the humblest of these three abodes
Dwelt Joseph, his wife Mary, and their child.
A honeysuckle and a moss-rose grew,
With many blossoms, on their cottage front;
And o'er the gable warmed by the South
A sunny grape vine broadened shady leaves
Which gave its tendrils shelter, as they hung
Trembling upon the bloom of purple fruit.
And, like the wreathed shadows and deep glows
Which the sun spreads from some old oriel
Upon the marble Altar and the gold
Of God's own Tabernacle, where he dwells
For ever, so the blossoms and the vine,
On Jesus' home climbing above the roof,
Traced intricate their windings all about
The yellow thatch, and part concealed the nests
Whence noisy close-housed sparrows peeped unseen.
And Joseph had a little dove-cote placed
Between the gable-window and the eaves,
Where two white turtle doves (a gift of love
From Mary's kinsman Zachary to her child)
Cooed pleasantly; and broke upon the ear
The ever dying sound of falling waves.

And so it came to pass, one Summer morn,
The mother dove first brought her fledgeling out
To see the sun. It was her only one,
And she had breasted it through three long weeks
With patient instinct till it broke the shell;
And she had nursed it with all tender care,
Another three, and watched the white down grow
Into full feather, till it left her nest.
And now it stood outside its narrow home,
With tremulous wings let loose and blinking eyes;
While, hovering near, the old dove often tried
By many lures to tempt it to the ground,
That they might feed from Jesus' hand, who stood
Watching them from below. The timid bird
At last took heart, and, stretching out its wings,

Brushed the light vine-leaves as it fluttered down.
Just then a hawk rose from a tree, and thrice
Wheeled in the air, and poised his aim to drop
On the young dove, whose quivering plumage swelled
About the sunken talons as it died.
Then the hawk fixed his round eye on the child,
Shook from his beak the stained down, screamed, and flapped
His broad arched wings, and, darting to a cleft
I' the rocks, there sullenly devoured his prey.
And Jesus heard the mother's anguished cry,
Weak like the distant sob of some lost child,
Who in his terror runs from path to path,
Doubtful alike of all; so did the dove,
As though death-stricken, beat about the air;
Till, settling on the vine, she drooped her head
Deep in her ruffled feathers. She sat there,
Brooding upon her loss, and did not move
All through that day.

And the child Jesus wept,
And, sitting by her, covered up his face:
Until a cloud, alone between the earth
And sun, passed with its shadow over him.
Then Jesus for a moment looked above;
And a few drops of rain fell on his brow,
Sad, as with broken hints of a lost dream,
Or dim foreboding of some future ill.

Now, from a garden near, a fair-haired girl
Came, carrying a handful of choice flowers,
Which in her lap she sorted orderly,
As little children do at Easter-time
To have all seemly when their Lord shall rise.
Then Jesus' covered face she gently raised,
Placed in his hand the flowers, and kissed his cheek
And tried with soothing words to comfort him;
He from his eyes spoke thanks.

But still the tears,
Fast trickling down his face, drop upon drop,
Fell to the ground. That sad look left him not
Till night brought sleep, and sleep closed o'er his woe.

II. The Scourging.

Again there came a day when Mary sat
Within the latticed doorway's fretted shade,
Working in bright and many colored threads
A girdle for her child, who at her feet
Lay with his gentle face upon her lap.
Both little hands were crossed and tightly clasped
Around her knee. On them the gleams of light
Which broke through overhanging blossoms warm,
And cool transparent leaves, seemed like the gems
Which deck Our Lady's shrine when incense-smoke
Ascends before her, like them, dimly seen
Behind the stream of white and slanting rays
Which came from heaven, as a veil of light,
Across the darkened porch, and glanced upon
The threshold-stone; and here a moth, just born
To new existence, stopped upon her flight,
To bask her blue-eyed scarlet wings spread out
Broad to the sun on Jesus' naked foot,
Advancing its warm glow to where the grass,
Trimmed neatly, grew around the cottage door.

And the child, looking in his mother's face,
Would join in converse upon holy things
With her, or, lost in thought, would seem to watch
The orange-belted wild bees when they stilled
Their hum, to press with honey-searching trunk
The juicy grape; or drag their waxed legs
Half buried in some leafy cool recess
Found in a rose; or else swing heavily
Upon the bending woodbine's fragrant mouth,
And rob the flower of sweets to feed the rock,
Where, in a hazel-covered crag aloft
Parting two streams that fell in mist below,
The wild bees ranged their waxen vaulted cells.

As the time passed, an ass's yearling colt,
Bearing a heavy load, came down the lane
That wound from Nazareth by Joseph's house,
Sloping down to the sands. And two young men,
The owners of the colt, with many blows
From lash and goad wearied its patient sides;
Urging it past its strength, so they might win
Unto the beach before a ship should sail.

Passing the door, the ass turned round its head,
And looked on Jesus: and he knew the look;
And, knowing it, knew too the strange dark cross
Lying upon its shoulders and its back.
It was a foal of that same ass which bare
The infant and the mother, when they fled
To Egypt from the edge of Herod's sword.
And Jesus watched them, till they reached the sands.
Then, by his mother sitting down once more,
Once more there came that shadow of deep grief
Upon his brow when Mary looked at him:
And she remembered it in days that came.

III. The Crowning with Thorns.

And the time passed.
And, one bright summer eve,
The child sat by himself upon the beach,
While Joseph's barge freighted with heavy wood,
Bound homewards, slowly labored thro' the calm.
And, as he watched the long waves swell and break,
Run glistening to his feet, and sink again,
Three children, and then two, with each an arm
Around the other, throwing up their songs,
Such happy songs as only children know,
Came by the place where Jesus sat alone.
But, when they saw his thoughtful face, they ceased,
And, looking at each other, drew near him;
While one who had upon his head a wreath
Of hawthorn flowers, and in his hand a reed,
Put these both from him, saying, "Here is one
Whom you shall all prefer instead of me
To be our king;" and then he placed the wreath
On Jesus' brow, who meekly bowed his head.
And, when he took the reed, the children knelt,
And cast their simple offerings at his feet:
And, almost wondering why they loved him so,
Kissed him with reverence, promising to yield
Grave fealty. And Jesus did return
Their childish salutations; and they passed
Singing another song, whose music chimed
With the sea's murmur, like a low sweet chant
Chanted in some wide church to Jesus Christ.

And Jesus listened till their voices sank
Behind the jutting rocks, and died away :
Then the wave broke, and Jesus felt alone.
Who being alone, on his fair countenance
And saddened beauty all unlike a child's
The sun of innocence did light no smile,
As on the group of happy faces gone.

IV. Jesus Carrying his Cross.

And, when the barge arrived, and Joseph bare
The wood upon his shoulders, piece by piece,
Up to his shed, Jesus ran by his side,
Yearning for strength to help the aged man
Who tired himself with work all day for him.
But Joseph said : "My child, it is God's will
That I should work for thee until thou art
Of age to help thyself.—Bide thou his time
Which cometh—when thou wilt be strong enough,
And on thy shoulders bear a tree like this."
So, while he spake, he took the last one up,
Settling it with heaved back, fetching his breath.
Then Jesus lifted deep prophetic eyes
Full in the old man's face, but nothing said,
Running still on to open first the door.

V. The Crucifixion.

Joseph had one ewe-sheep ; and she brought forth,
Early one season, and before her time,
A weakly lamb. It chanced to be upon
Jesus' birthday, when he was eight years old.
So Mary said—"We'll name it after him,"—
(Because she ever thought to please her child)—
"And we will sign it with a small red cross
Upon the back, a mark to know it by."
And Jesus loved the lamb ; and, as it grew
Spotless and pure and loving like himself,
White as the mother's milk it fed upon,
He gave not up his care, till it became
Of strength enough to browse ; and then, because
Joseph had no land of his own, being poor,
He sent away the lamb to feed amongst
A neighbour's flock some distance from his home ;
Where Jesus went to see it every day.

One late Spring eve, their daily work being done,
Mother and child, according to their wont,
Went, hand in hand, their chosen evening walk.
A pleasant wind rose from the sea, and blew
Light flakes of waving silver o'er the fields
Ready for mowing, and the golden West
Warmed half the sky: the low sun flickered through
The hedge-rows, as they passed; while hawthorn trees
Scattered their snowy leaves and scent around.
The sloping woods were rich in varied leaf,
And musical in murmur and in song.

Long ere they reached the field, the wistful lamb
Saw them approach, and ran from side to side
The gate, pushing its eager face between
The lowest bars, and bleating for pure joy.
And Jesus, kneeling by it, fondled with
The little creature, that could scarce find how
To show its love enough; licking his hands,
Then, starting from him, gambolled back again,
And, with its white feet upon Jesus' knees,
Nestled its head by his: and, as the sun
Sank down behind them, broadening as it neared
The low horizon, Mary thought it seemed
To clothe them like a glory.—But her look
Grew thoughtful, and she said: "I had, last night,
A wandering dream. This brings it to my mind;
And I will tell it thee as we walk home.

"I dreamed a weary way I had to go
Alone, across an unknown land: such wastes
We sometimes see in visions of the night,
Barren and dimly lighted. There was not
A tree in sight, save one seared leafless trunk,
Like a rude cross; and, scattered here and there,
A shrivelled thistle grew: the grass was dead,
And the starved soil glared through its scanty tufts
In bare and chalky patches, cracked and hot,
Chafing my tired feet, that caught upon
Its parched surface; for a thirsty sun
Had sucked all moisture from the ground it burned,
And, red and glowing, stared upon me like
A furnace eye when all the flame is spent.
I felt it was a dream; and so I tried

To close my eyes, and shut it out from sight.
Then, sitting down, I hid my face; but this
Only increased the dread; and so I gazed
With open eyes into my dream again.
The mists had thickened, and had grown quite black
Over the sun; and darkness closed round me.
(Thy father said it thundered towards the morn.)
But soon, far off, I saw a dull green light
Break through the clouds, which fell across the earth,
Like death upon a bad man's upturned face.
Sudden it burst with fifty forked darts
In one white flash, so dazzling bright it seemed
To hide the landscape in one blaze of light.
When the loud crash that came down with it had
Rolled its long echo into stillness, through
The calm dark silence came a plaintive sound;
And, looking towards the tree, I saw that it
Was scorched with the lightning; and there stood
Close to its foot a solitary sheep
Bleating upon the edge of a deep pit,
Unseen till now, choked up with briars and thorns;
And into this a little snow white lamb,
Like to thine own, had fallen. It was dead
And cold, and must have lain there very long;
While, all the time, the mother had stood by,
Helpless, and moaning with a piteous bleat.
The lamb had struggled much to free itself,
For many cruel thorns had torn its head
And bleeding feet; and one had pierced its side,
From which flowed blood and water. Strange the things
We see in dreams, and hard to understand;—
For, stooping down to raise its lifeless head,
I thought it changed into the quiet face
Of my own child. Then I awoke, and saw
The dim moon shining through the watery clouds
On thee awake within thy little bed."

Then Jesus, looking up, said quietly:
"We read that God will speak to those he loves
Sometimes in visions. He might speak to thee
Of things to come his mercy partly veils
From thee, my mother; or perhaps, the thought
Floated across thy mind of what we read

Aloud before we went to rest last night;—
I mean that passage in Isaias' book,
Which tells about the patient suffering lamb,
And which it seems that no one understands."
Then Mary bent her face to the child's brow,
And kissed him twice, and, parting back his hair,
Kissed him again. And Jesus felt her tears
Drop warm upon his cheek, and he looked sad
When silently he put his hand again
Within his mother's. As they came, they went,
Hand in hand homeward.
And the child abode
With Mary and with Joseph, till the time
When all the things should be fulfilled in him
Which God had spoken by his prophets' mouth
Long since; and God was with him, and God's grace.

A Pause of Thought.

I LOOKED for that which is not, nor can be,
And hope deferred made my heart sick, in truth;
But years must pass before a hope of youth
Is resigned utterly.

I watched and waited with a steadfast will:
And, tho' the object seemed to flee away
That I so longed for, ever, day by day,
I watched and waited still.

Sometimes I said,—"This thing shall be no more;
My expectation wearies, and shall cease;
I will resign it now, and be at peace:"—
Yet never gave it o'er.

Sometimes I said,—"It is an empty name
I long for; to a name why should I give
The peace of all the days I have to live?"—
Yet gave it all the same.

Alas! thou foolish one,—alike unfit
For healthy joy and salutary pain,
Thou knowest the chase useless, and again
Turnest to follow it.

The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art.

THE object we have proposed to ourselves in writing on Art, has been "an endeavour to encourage and enforce an entire adherence to the simplicity of nature; and also to direct attention, as an auxiliary medium, to the comparatively few works which Art has yet produced in this spirit." It is in accordance with the former and more prominent of these objects that the writer proposes at present to treat.

An unprejudiced spectator of the recent progress and main direction of Art in England will have observed, as a great change in the character of the productions of the modern school, a marked attempt to lead the taste of the public into a new channel by producing pure transcripts and faithful studies from nature, instead of conventionalities and feeble reminiscences from the Old Masters; an entire seeking after originality in a more humble manner than has been practised since the decline of Italian Art in the Middle Ages. This has been most strongly shown by the landscape painters, among whom there are many who have raised an entirely new school of natural painting, and whose productions undoubtedly surpass all others in the simple attention to nature in detail as well as in generalities. By this they have succeeded in earning for themselves the reputation of being the finest landscape painters in Europe. But, although this success has been great and merited, it is not of them that we have at present to treat, but rather to recommend their example to their fellow-labourers, the historical painters.

That the system of study to which this would necessarily lead requires a somewhat longer and more devoted course of observation than any other is undoubted; but that it has a reward in a greater effect produced, and more delight in the searching, is, the writer thinks, equally certain. We shall find a greater pleasure in proportion to our closer communion with nature, and by a more exact adherence to all her details, (for nature has no peculiarities or excentricities) in whatsoever direction her study may conduct.

This patient devotedness appears to be a conviction peculiar to, or at least more purely followed by, the early Italian Painters; a feeling which, exaggerated, and its object mistaken by them, though still held holy and pure, was the cause of the retirement of many of the greatest men from the world to the monastery; there, in undisturbed silence and humility,

"Monotonous to paint
Those endless cloisters and eternal aisles
With the same series, Virgin, Babe, and Saint,
With the same cold, calm, beautiful regard."

Even with this there is not associated a melancholy feeling alone; for, although the object was mistaken, yet there is evinced a consciousness of purpose definite and most elevated; and again, we must remember, as a great cause of this effect, that the Arts were, for the most part, cleric, and not laic, or at least were under the predominant influence of the clergy, who were the most important patrons by far, and their houses the safest receptacles for the works of the great painter.

The modern artist does not retire to monasteries, or practise discipline; but he may show his participation in the same high feeling by a firm attachment to truth in every point of representation, which is the most just method. For how can good be sought by evil means, or by falsehood, or by slight in any degree? By a determination to represent the thing and the whole of the thing, by training himself to the deepest observation of its fact and detail, enabling himself to reproduce, as far as is possible, nature herself, the painter will best evince his share of faith.

It is by this attachment to truth in its most severe form that the followers of the Arts have to show that they share in the peculiar character of the present age,—a humility of knowledge, a diffidence of attainment; for, as Emerson has well observed,

"The time is infected with Hamlet's unhappiness,—
'Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.'

Is this so bad then? Sight is the last thing to be pitied. Would we be blind? Do we fear lest we should outsee nature and God, and drink truth dry?"

It has been said that there is presumption in this movement of the modern school, a want of deference to established authorities, a removing of ancient landmarks. This is best answered by the profession that nothing can be more humble than the pretension to the observation of facts alone, and the truthful rendering of them. If we are not to depart from established principles, how are we to advance at all? Are we to remain still? Remember, no thing remains still; that which does not advance falls backward. That this movement is an advance, and that it is of nature herself, is shown by its going nearer to truth in every object produced, and by its being guided by the very principles the ancient painters followed, as soon as they attained the mere power of representing an object faithfully.

These principles are now revived, not from them, though through their example, but from nature herself.

That the earlier painters came nearer to fact, that they were less of the art, artificial, cannot be better shown than by the statement of a few examples from their works. There is a magnificent Niello work by an unknown Florentine artist, on which is a group of the Saviour in the lap of the Virgin. She is old, (a most touching point); lamenting aloud, clutches passionately the heavy-weighted body on her knee; her mouth is open. Altogether it is one of the most powerful appeals possible to be conceived; for there are few but will consider this identification with humanity to be of more effect than any refined or emasculate treatment of the same subject by later artists, in which we have the fact forgotten for the sake of the type of religion, which the Virgin was always taken to represent, whence she is shown as still young; as if, nature being taken typically, it were not better to adhere to the emblem throughout, confident by this means to maintain its appropriateness, and, therefore, its value and force.

In the Niello work here mentioned there is a delineation of the Fall, in which the serpent has given to it a human head with a most sweet, crafty expression. Now in these two instances the style is somewhat rude; but there are passion and feeling in it. This is not a question of mere execution, but of mind, however developed. Let us not mistake, however, from this that execution should be neglected, but only maintained as a most important *aid*, and in that quality alone, so that we do not forget the soul for the hand. The power of representing an object, that its entire intention may be visible, its lesson felt, is all that is absolutely necessary: mere technicalities of performance are but additions; and not the real intent and end of painting, as many have considered them to be. For as the knowledge is stronger and more pure in Masaccio than in the Caracci, and the faith higher and greater,—so the first represents nature with more true feeling and love, with a deeper insight into her tenderness; he follows her more humbly, and has produced to us more of her simplicity; we feel his appeal to be more earnest: it is the crying out of the man, with none of the strut of the actor.

Let us have the mind and the mind's-workings, not the remains of earnest thought which has been frittered away by a long dreary course of preparatory study, by which all life has been evaporated. Never forget that there is in the wide river of nature something which every body who has a rod and line may catch, precious things which every one may dive for.

It need not be feared that this course of education would lead to a

repetition of the toe-trippings of the earliest Italian school, a sneer which is manifestly unfair; for this error, as well as several others of a similar kind, was not the result of blindness or stupidity, but of the simple ignorance of what had not been applied to the service of painting at their time. It cannot be shown that they were incorrect in expression, false in drawing, or unnatural in what is called composition. On the contrary, it is demonstrable that they exceeded all others in these particulars, that they partook less of coarseness and of conventional sentiment than any school which succeeded them, and that they looked more to nature; in fact, were more true, and less artificial. That their subjects were generally of a melancholy cast is acknowledged, which was an accident resulting from the positions their pictures were destined to occupy. No man ever complained that the Scriptures were morbid in their tendency because they treat of serious and earnest subjects: then why of the pictures which represent such? A certain gaunt length and slenderness have also been commented upon most severely; as if the Italians of the fourteenth century were as so many dray horses, and the artist were blamed for not following his model. The consequence of this direction of taste is that we have life-guardsmen and pugilists taken as models for kings, gentlemen, and philosophers. The writer was once in a studio where a man, six feet two inches in height, with atlantean shoulders, was sitting for King Alfred. That there is no greater absurdity than this will be perceived by any one that has ever read the description of the person of the king given by his historian and friend Asser.

The sciences have become almost exact within the present century. Geology and chemistry are almost re-instituted. The first has been nearly created; the second expanded so widely that it now searches and measures the creation. And how has this been done but by bringing greater knowledge to bear upon a wider range of experiment; by being precise in the search after truth? If this adherence to fact, to experiment and not theory,—to begin at the beginning and not fly to the end,—has added so much to the knowledge of man in science; why may it not greatly assist the moral purposes of the Arts? It cannot be well to degrade a lesson by falsehood. Truth in every particular ought to be the aim of the artist. Admit no untruth: let the priest's garment be clean.

Let us now return to the Early Italian Painters. A complete refutation of any charge that the character of their school was necessarily gloomy will be found in the works of Benozzo Gozzoli, as in his 'Vineyard' where there are some grape-gatherers the most elegant and graceful imaginable; this painter's children are the

most natural ever painted. In Ghiberti,—in Fra Angilico, (well named),—in Masaccio,—in Ghirlandajo, and in Baccio della Porta, in fact in nearly all the works of the painters of this school, will be found a character of gentleness, grace, and freedom, which cannot be surpassed by any other school, be that which it may; and it is evident that this result must have been obtained by their peculiar attachment to simple nature alone, their casting aside all ornament, or rather their perfect ignorance of such,—a happy fortune none have shared with them. To show that with all these qualifications they have been pre-eminent in energy and dignity, let us instance the 'Air Demons' of Orcagna, where there is a woman borne through the air by an Evil Spirit. Her expression is the most terrible imaginable; she grasps her bearer with desperation, looking out around her into space, agonized with terror. There are other figures in the same picture of men who have been cast down, and are falling through the air: one descends with his hands tied, his chin up, and long hair hanging from his head in a mass. One of the Evil Spirits hovering over them has flat wings, as though they were made of plank: this gives a most powerful character to the figure. Altogether, this picture contains perhaps a greater amount of bold imagination and originality of conception than any of the kind ever painted. For sublimity there are few works which equal the 'Archangels' of Giotto, who stand singly, holding their sceptres, and with relapsed wings. The 'Paul' of Masaccio is a well-known example of the dignified simplicity of which these artists possessed so large a share. These instances might be multiplied without end; but surely enough have been cited in the way of example to show the surpassing talent and knowledge of these painters, and their consequent success, by following natural principles, until the introduction of false and meretricious ornament led the Arts from the simple chastity of nature, which it is as useless to attempt to elevate as to endeavour to match the works of God by those of man. Let the artist be content to study nature alone, and not dream of elevating any of her works, which are alone worthy of representation.*

The Arts have always been most important moral guides. Their

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* The sources from which these examples are drawn, and where many more might be found, are principally:—*D'Agincourt:* "*Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens;*"—*Rossini:* "*Storia della Pittura;*"—*Ottley:* "*Italian School of Design,*" and his 120 Fac-similes of scarce prints;—and the "Gates of San Giovanni," by Ghiberti; of which last a cast of one entire is set up in the Central School of Design, Somerset House; portions of the same are also in the Royal Academy.

flourishing has always been coincident with the most wholesome period of a nation's: never with the full and gaudy bloom which but hides corruption, but the severe health of its most active and vigorous life; its mature youth, and not the floridity of age, which, like the wide full open petals of a flower, indicates that its glory is about to pass away. There has certainly always been a period like the short warm season the Canadians call the "Indian Summer," which is said to be produced by the burning of the western forests, causing a factitious revival of the dying year: so there always seems to have been a flush of life before the final death of the Arts in each period:—in Greece, in the sculptors and architects of the time after Pericles; in the Germans, with the successors of Albert Durer. In fact, in every school there has been a spring, a summer, an autumn, an "Indian Summer," and then winter; for as surely as the "Indian Summer," (which is, after all, but an unhealthy flush produced by destruction,) so surely does winter come. In the Arts, the winter has been exaggerated action, conventionalism, gaudy colour, false sentiment, voluptuousness, and poverty of invention: and, of all these characters, that which has been the most infallible herald of decease, voluptuousness, has been the most rapid and sure. Corruption lieth under it; and every school, and indeed every individual, that has pandered to this, and departed from the true spirit in which all study should be conducted, sought to degrade and sensualize, instead of chasten and render pure, the humanity it was instructed to elevate. So has that school, and so have those individuals, lost their own power and descended from their high seat, fallen from the priest to the mere parasite, from the law-giver to the mere courtier.

If we have entered upon a new age, a new cycle of man, of which there are many signs, let us have it unstained by this vice of sensuality of mind. The English school has lately lost a great deal of this character; why should we not be altogether free from it? Nothing can degrade a man or a nation more than this meanness; why should we not avoid it? Sensuality is a meanness repugnant to youth, and disgusting in age: a degradation at all times. Let us say

> "My strength is as the strength of ten,
> Because my heart is pure."

Bearing this in mind,—the conviction that, without the pure heart, nothing can be done worthy of us; by this, that the most successful school of painters has produced upon us the intention of their earnestness at this distance of time,—let us follow in their path,

guided by their light: not so subservient as to lose our own freedom, but in the confidence of equal power and equal destiny; and then rely that we shall obtain the same success and equal or greater power, such as is given to the age in which we live. This is the only course that is worthy of the influence which might be exerted by means of the Arts upon the character of the people: therefore let it be the only one for us to follow if we hope to share in the work.

That the real power of the Arts, in conjunction with Poetry, upon the actions of any age is, or might be, predominant above all others will be readily allowed by all that have given any thought to the subject: and that there is no assignable limit to the good that may be wrought by their influence is another point on which there can be small doubt. Let us then endeavour to call up and exert this power in the worthiest manner, not forgetting that we chose a difficult path in which there are many snares, and holding in mind the motto, "*No Cross, no Crown.*"

Believe that there is that in the fact of truth, though it be only in the character of a single leaf earnestly studied, which may do its share in the great labor of the world: remember that it is by truth alone that the Arts can ever hold the position for which they were intended, as the most powerful instruments, the most gentle guides; that, of all classes, there is none to whom the celebrated words of Lessing, "That the destinies of a nation depend upon its young men between nineteen and twenty-five years of age," can apply so well as to yourselves. Recollect, that your portion in this is most important: that your share is with the poet's share; that, in every careless thought or neglected doubt, you shelve your duty, and forsake your trust; fulfil and maintain these, whether in the hope of personal fame and fortune, or from a sense of power used to its intentions; and you may hold out both hands to the world. Trust it, and it will have faith in you; will hearken to the precepts you may have permission to impart.

Song.

Oh! roses for the flush of youth,
And laurel for the perfect prime;
But pluck an ivy-branch for me,
Grown old before my time.

Oh! violets for the grave of youth,
And bay for those dead in their prime;
Give me the withered leaves I chose
Before in the olden time.

Morning Sleep.

Another day hath dawned
Since, hastily and tired, I threw myself
Into the dark lap of advancing sleep.
Meanwhile through the oblivion of the night
The ponderous world its old course hath fulfilled;
And now the gradual sun begins to throw
Its slanting glory on the heads of trees,
And every bird stirs in its nest revealed,
And shakes its dewy wings.

A blessed gift
Unto the weary hath been mine to-night,
Slumber unbroken: now it floats away:—
But whether 'twere not best to woo it still,
The head thus properly disposed, the eyes
In a continual dawning, mingling earth
And heaven with vagrant fantasies,—one hour,—
Yet for another hour? I will not break
The shining woof; I will not rudely leap
Out of this golden atmosphere, through which
I see the forms of immortalities.
Verily, soon enough the laboring day
With its necessitous unmusical calls
Will force the indolent conscience into life.

The uncouth moth upon the window-panes
Hath ceased to flap, or traverse with blind whirr
The room's dusk corners; and the leaves without
Vibrate upon their thin stems with the breeze
Flying towards the light. To an Eastern vale
That light may now be waning, and across
The tall reeds by the Ganges, lotus-paved,
Lengthening the shadows of the banyan-tree.
The rice-fields are all silent in the glow,
All silent the deep heaven without a cloud,
Burning like molten gold. A red canoe
Crosses with fan-like paddles and the sound
Of feminine song, freighted with great-eyed maids
Whose unzoned bosoms swell on the rich air;

A lamp is in each hand ; some mystic rite
Go they to try. Such rites the birds may see,
Ibis or emu, from their cocoa nooks,—
What time the granite sentinels that watch
The mouths of cavern-temples hail the first
Faint star, and feel the gradual darkness blend
Their august lineaments ;—what time Haroun
Perambulated Bagdat, and none knew
He was the Caliph who knocked soberly
By Giafar's hand at their gates shut betimes ;—
What time prince Assad sat on the high hill
'Neath the pomegranate-tree, long wearying
For his lost brother's step ;—what time, as now,
Along our English sky, flame-furrows cleave
And break the quiet of the cold blue clouds,
And the first rays look in upon our roofs.

Let the day come or go ; there is no let
Or hindrance to the indolent wilfulness
Of fantasy and dream-land. Place and time
And bodily weight are for the wakeful only.
Now they exist not : life is like that cloud,
Floating, poised happily in mid-air, bathed
In a sustaining halo, soft yet clear,
Voyaging on, though to no bourne ; all heaven
Its own wide home alike, earth far below
Fading still further, further. Yet we see,
In fancy, its green fields, its towers, and towns
Smoking with life, its roads with traffic thronged
And tedious travellers within iron cars,
Its rivers with their ships, and laborers,
To whose raised eye, as, stretched upon the sward,
They may enjoy some interval of rest,
That little cloud appears no living thing,
Although it moves, and changes as it moves.
There is an old and memorable tale
Of some sound sleeper being borne away
By banded fairies in the mottled hour
Before the cockcrow, through unknown weird woods
And mighty forests, where the boughs and roots
Opened before him, closed behind ;—thenceforth
A wise man lived he, all unchanged by years.
Perchance again these fairies may return,

And evermore shall I remain as now,
A dreamer half awake, a wandering cloud!

The spell
Of Merlin old that ministered to fate,
The tales of visiting ghosts, or fairy elves,
Or witchcraft, are no fables. But his task
Is ended with the night;—the thin white moon
Evades the eye, the sun breaks through the trees,
And the charmed wizard comes forth a mere man
From out his circle. Thus it is, whate'er
We know and understand hath lost the power
Over us;—we are then the master. Still
All Fancy's world is real; no diverse mark
Is on the stores of memory, whether gleaned
From childhood's early wonder at the charm
That bound the lady in the echoless cave
Where lay the sheath'd sword and the bugle horn,—
Or from the fullgrown intellect, that works
From age to age, exploring darkest truths,
With sympathy and knowledge in one yoke
Ploughing the harvest land.

The lark is up,
Piercing the dazzling sky beyond the search
Of the acutest love: enough for me
To hear its song: but now it dies away,
Leaving the chirping sparrow to attract
The listless ear,—a minstrel, sooth to say,
Nearly as good. And now a hum like that
Of swarming bees on meadow-flowers comes up.
Each hath its just and yet luxurious joy,
As if to live were to be blessed. The mild
Maternal influence of nature thus
Ennobles both the sentient and the dead;—
The human heart is as an altar wreathed,
On which old wine pours, streaming o'er the leaves,
And down the symbol-carved sides. Behold!
Unbidden, yet most welcome, who be these?
The high-priests of this altar, poet-kings;—
Chaucer, still young with silvery beard that seems
Worthy the adoration of a child;
And Spenser, perfect master, to whom all
Sweet graces ministered. The shut eye weaves

A picture ;—the immortals pass along
Into the heaven, and others follow still,
Each on his own ray-path, till all the field
Is threaded with the foot-prints of the great.
And now the passengers are lost ; long lines
Only are left, all intertwisted, dark
Upon a flood of light. . . . . I am awake !
I hear domestic voices on the stair.

Already hath the mower finished half
His summer day's ripe task ; already hath
His scythe been whetted often ; and the heaps
Behind him lie like ridges from the tide.
In sooth, it is high time to wave away
The cup of Comus, though with nectar filled,
And sweet as odours to the mariner
From lands unseen, across the wide blank sea.

Sonnet.

When midst the summer-roses the warm bees
  Are swarming in the sun, and thou—so full
  Of innocent glee—dost with thy white hands pull
Pink scented apples from the garden trees
To fling at me, I catch them, on my knees,
  Like those who gather'd manna ; and I cull
  Some hasty buds to pelt thee—white as wool
Lilies, or yellow jonquils, or heartsease ;—
Then I can speak my love, ev'n tho' thy smiles
  Gush out among thy blushes, like a flock
Of bright birds from rose-bowers ; but when thou'rt gone
  I have no speech,—no magic that beguiles,
  The stream of utterance from the harden'd rock :—
The dial cannot speak without the sun !

Stars and Moon.

Beneath the stars and summer moon
A pair of wedded lovers walk,
Upon the stars and summer moon
They turn their happy eyes, and talk.

Edith.

"Those stars, that moon, for me they shine
With lovely, but no startling light;
My joy is much, but not as thine,
A joy that fills the pulse, like fright."

Alfred.

"My love, a darken'd conscience clothes
The world in sackcloth; and, I fear,
The stain of life this new heart loathes,
Still clouds my sight; but thine is clear.

"True vision is no startling boon
To one in whom it always lies;
But if true sight of stars and moon
Were strange to thee, it would surprise.

"Disease it is and dearth in me
Which thou believest genius, wealth;
And that imagined want in thee
Is riches and abundant health.

"O, little merit I my bride!
And therefore will I love her more;
Renewing, by her gentle side,
Lost worth: let this thy smile restore!"

Edith.

"Ah, love! we both, with longing deep,
Love words and actions kind, which are
More good for life than bread or sleep,
More beautiful than Moon or Star."

On the Mechanism of a Historical Picture.

Part I. The Design.

In tracing these memoranda of the course to be pursued in producing a work of the class commonly denominated "Historic Art," we have no wish to set ourselves in opposition to the practice of other artists. We are quite willing to believe that there may be various methods of working out the same idea, each productive of a satisfactory result. Should any one therefore regard it as a subject for controversy, we would only reply that, if different, or to them better, methods be adopted by other painters, no less certain is it that there are numbers who at the onset of their career have not the least knowledge of any one of these methods; and that it is chiefly for such that these notes have been penned. In short, that to all about to paint their first picture we address ourselves.

The first advice that should be given, on painting a historical picture, ought undoubtedly to be on the choosing of a fit subject; but, the object of the present paper being purely practical, it would ill commence with a question which would entail a dissertation bearing upon the most abstract properties of Art. Should it afterwards appear necessary, we may append such a paper to the last number of these articles; but, for the present, we will content ourselves with beginning where the student may first encounter a difficulty in giving body to his idea.

The first care of the painter, after having selected his subject, should be to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the character of the times, and habits of the people, which he is about to represent; and next, to consult the proper authorities for his costume, and such objects as may fill his canvass; as the architecture, furniture, vegetation or landscape, or accessories, necessary to the elucidation of the subject. By not pursuing this course, the artist is in danger of imagining an effect, or disposition of lines, incompatible with the costume of his figures, or objects surrounding them; and it will be found always a most difficult thing to efface an idea that has once taken possession of the mind. Besides which, it is impossible to conceive a design with any truth, not being acquainted with the character, habits, and appearance, of the people represented.

Having, by such means, secured the materials of which his work must be composed, the artist must endeavour, as far as lies in his power, to embody the picture in his thoughts, before having recourse to paper. He must patiently consider his subject, revolving in his

mind every means that may assist the clear development of the story: giving the most prominent places to the most important actors, and carefully rejecting incidents that cannot be expressed by pantomimic art without the aid of text. He must also, in this mental forerunner of his picture, arrange the "grouping" of his figures,—that is, the disposing of them in such agreeable clusters or situations on his canvass as may be compatible with the dramatic truth of the whole, (technically called the lines of a composition.) He must also consider the color, and disposition of light and dark masses in his design, so as to call attention to the principal objects, (technically called the "effect.") Thus, to recapitulate, the painter, in his first conception of his picture, will have to combine three qualities, each subordinate to the other;—the intellectual, or clear development, dramatic truth, and sentiment, of his incident;—the construction, or disposition of his groups and lines, as most conducive to clearness, effect, and harmony;—and the chromatic, or arrangement of colors, light and shade, most suitable to impress and attract the beholder.*

Having settled these points in his mind, as definitely as his faculties will allow of, the student will take pencil and paper, and sketch roughly each separate figure in his composition, studying his own acting, (in a looking-glass) or else that of any friend he may have of an artistic or poetic temperament, but not employing for the purpose the ordinary paid models.—It will be always found that they are stiff and feelingless, and, as such, tend to curb the vivacity of a first conception, so much so that the artist may believe an action impossible, through the want of comprehension of the model, which to himself or a friend might prove easy.

Here let the artist spare neither time nor labor, but exert himself beyond his natural energies, seeking to enter into the character of each actor, studying them one after the other, limb for limb, hand for hand, finger for finger, noting each inflection of joint, or tension of sinew, searching for dramatic truth internally in himself, and in all external nature, shunning affectation and exaggeration, and striving after pathos, and purity of feeling, with patient endeavor and utter simplicity of heart. For on this labor must depend the success of his work with the public. Artists may praise his color,

* Many artists, chiefly of the schools not colorists, are in the habit of making their designs in outline, leaving the colors and light and shade to be thought of afterwards. This plan may offer facilities; but we doubt if it be possible to arrange satisfactorily the colors of a work which has been designed in outline without consideration of these qualities.

drawing, or manipulation, his chiaroscuro, or his lines; but the clearness, truth, and sentiment, of his work will alone affect the many.

The action of each figure being now determinate, the next step will be to make a sketch in oil of the whole design; after which, living models, as like the artist's conception as can be found, must be procured, to make outlines of the nude of each figure, and again sketches of the same, draped in the proper costume.*

From these studies, the painter will prepare a second sketch, in outline, of the whole, being, in fact, a small and hasty cartoon.†

In this last preparation of the design, the chief care of the student will be the grouping, and the correct size and place of each figure; also the perspective of the architecture and ground plan will now have to be settled; a task requiring much patient calculation, and usually proving a source of disgust to the novice not endowed with much perseverance. But, above all, the quality to be most studied in this outline design will be the *proportion* of the whole work.

And with a few remarks on this quality, which might appropriately be termed "constructive beauty in art," we will close this paper on "the Design," as belonging more properly to the mechanical than the intellectual side of art; as being rather the slow growth of experience than the spontaneous impulse of the artistic temperament. It is a feature in art rather apt to savor of conventionality to such as would look on nature as the only school of art, who would consider it but as the exponent of thought and feeling; while, on the other hand, we fear it likely to be studied to little effect by such as receive with indiscriminate and phlegmatic avidity all that is handed down to them in the shape of experience or time-sanctioned rule. But plastic art claims not merely our sympathy, in its highest capacity to emit thought and sentiment; but as form, colour, light, life, and beauty; and who shall settle the claims be-

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* There is always difficulty attending this very necessary portion of the study of the picture; because, if the dresses be borrowed or hired, at this period they may be only wanted for a few hours, and perhaps not required again for some months to paint into the picture.—Again, if the costume have to be made, and of expensive material, the portion of it seen may be sufficient to pin on to a lay figure, without having the whole made, which could not be worn by the living model. However, with all the larger or loose draperies, it is very necessary to sketch them first from the living model.

† Should the picture be of small dimensions, it will be found more expeditious to make an outline of it on paper the full size, which can be traced on to the canvass, keeping the latter clean. On the contrary, should the painting be large, the outline had better be made small, and squared to transfer to the canvass.

tween thought and beauty? But art has beauties of its own, which neither impair nor contradict the beauties of nature; but which are not of nature, and yet are, inasmuch as art itself is but part of nature: and of such, the beauties of the nature of art, is the feeling for constructive beauty. It interferes not with truth or sentiment; it is not the cause of unlikely order and improbable symmetry; it is not bounded by line or rule, nor taught by theory. It is a feeling for proportion, ever varying from an infinity of conflicting causes, that balances the picture as it balances the Gothic edifice; it is a germ planted in the breast of the artist, that gradually expands by cultivation.

To those who would foster its development the only rule we could offer would be never to leave a design, while they imagine they could alter for the better (subordinate to the truth of nature) the place of a single figure or group, or the direction of a line.

And to such as think it beneath their care we can only say that they neglect a refinement, of which every great master takes advantage to increase the fascination which beauty, feeling, or passion, exercises over the multitude.

A Testimony.

I said of laughter: It is vain;—
Of mirth I said: What profits it?—
Therefore I found a book, and writ
Therein, how ease and also pain,
How health and sickness, every one
Is vanity beneath the sun.

Man walks in a vain shadow; he
Disquieteth himself in vain.
The things that were shall be again.
The rivers do not fill the sea,
But turn back to their secret source:
The winds, too, turn upon their course.

Our treasures, moth and rust corrupt;
Or thieves break through and steal; or they
Make themselves wings and fly away.
One man made merry as he supp'd,
Nor guessed how when that night grew dim,
His soul would be required of him.

We build our houses on the sand
  Comely withoutside, and within ;
  But when the winds and rains begin
To beat on them, they cannot stand ;
They perish, quickly overthrown,
Loose at the hidden basement stone.

All things are vanity, I said :
  Yea vanity of vanities.
  The rich man dies ; and the poor dies :
The worm feeds sweetly on the dead.
Whatso thou lackest, keep this trust :—
All in the end shall have but dust.

The one inheritance, which best
  And worst alike shall find and share.
  The wicked cease from troubling there,
And there the weary are at rest ;
There all the wisdom of the wise
Is vanity of vanities.

Man flourishes as a green leaf,
  And as a leaf doth pass away ;
  Or, as a shade that cannot stay,
And leaves no track, his course is brief :
Yet doth man hope and fear and plan
Till he is dead :—oh foolish man !

Our eyes cannot be satisfied
  With seeing ; nor our ears be fill'd
  With hearing : yet we plant and build,
And buy, and make our borders wide :
We gather wealth, we gather care,
But know not who shall be our heir.

Why should we hasten to arise
  So early, and so late take rest ?
  Our labor is not good ; our best
Hopes fade ; our heart is stayed on lies :
Verily, we sow wind ; and we
Shall reap the whirlwind, verily.

He who hath little shall not lack ;
  He who hath plenty shall decay :
  Our fathers went ; we pass away ;

Our children follow on our track :
So generations fail, and so
They are renewed, and come and go.

The earth is fattened with our dead ;
  She swallows more and doth not cease ;
  Therefore her wine and oil increase
And her sheaves are not numbered ;
Therefore her plants are green, and all
Her pleasant trees lusty and tall.

Therefore the maidens cease to sing,
  And the young men are very sad ;
  Therefore the sowing is not glad,
And weary is the harvesting.
Of high and low, of great and small,
Vanity is the lot of all.

A king dwelt in Jerusalem :
  He was the wisest man on earth ;
  He had all riches from his birth,
And pleasures till he tired of them :
Then, having tested all things, he
Witnessed that all are vanity.

O When and Where.

All knowledge hath taught me,
All sorrow hath brought me,
    Are smothered sighs
    That pleasure lies,
Like the last gleam of evening's ray,
So far and far away,—far away.

Under the cold moist herbs
No wind the calm disturbs.
    O when and where?
    Nor here nor there.
Grass cools my face, grief heats my heart.
Will this life I swoon with never part?

Fancies at Leisure.

I. Noon Rest.

Following the river's course,
We come to where the sedges plant
Their thickest twinings at its source;—
A spot that makes the heart to pant,
Feeling its rest and beauty. Pull
The reeds' tops thro' your fingers; dull
Your sense of the world's life; and toss
The thought away of hap or cross:
Then shall the river seem to call
Your name, and the slow quiet crawl
Between your eyelids like a swoon;
And all the sounds at heat of noon
And all the silence shall so sing
Your eyes asleep as that no wing
Of bird in rustling by, no prone
Willow-branch on your hair, no drone
Droning about and past you,—nought
May soon avail to rouse you, caught
With sleep thro' heat in the sun's light,—
So good, tho' losing sound and sight,
You scarce would waken, if you might.

II. A Quiet Place.

My friend, are not the grasses here as tall
As you would wish to see? The runnell's fall
Over the rise of pebbles, and its blink
Of shining points which, upon this side, sink
In dark, yet still are there; this ragged crane
Spreading his wings at seeing us with vain
Terror, forsooth; the trees, a pulpy stock
Of toadstools huddled round them; and the flock—
Black wings after black wings—of ancient rook
By rook; has not the whole scene got a look
As though we were the first whose breath should fan
In two this spider's web, to give a span

Of life more to three flies? See, there's a stone
Seems made for us to sit on. Have men gone
By here, and passed? or rested on that bank
Or on this stone, yet seen no cause to thank
For the grass growing here so green and rank?

III. A Fall of Rain.

It was at day-break my thought said:
"The moon makes chequered chestnut-shade
There by the south-side where the vine
Grapples the wall; and if it shine
This evening thro' the boughs and leaves,
And if the wind with silence weaves
More silence than itself, each stalk
Of flower just swayed by it, we'll walk,
Mary and I, when every fowl
Hides beak and eyes in breast, the owl
Only awake to hoot."—But clover
Is beaten down now, and birds hover,
Peering for shelter round; no blade
Of grass stands sharp and tall; men wade
Thro' mire with frequent plashing sting
Of rain upon their faces. Sing,
Then, Mary, to me thro' the dark:
But kiss me first: my hand shall mark
Time, pressing yours the while I hark.

IV. Sheer Waste.

Is it a little thing to lie down here
  Beside the water, looking into it,
  And see there grass and fallen leaves interknit,
  And small fish sometimes passing thro' some bit
Of tangled grass where there's an outlet clear?

And then a drift of wind perhaps will come,
  And blow the insects hovering all about
  Into the water. Some of them get out;
  Others swim with sharp twitches; and you doubt
Whether of life or death for other some.

Meanwhile the blueflies sway themselves along
Over the water's surface, or close by;
Not one in ten beyond the grass will fly
That closely skirts the stream; nor will your eye
Meet any where the sunshine is not strong.

After a time you find, you know not how,
That it is quite a stretch of energy
To do what you have done unconsciously,—
That is, pull up the grass; and then you see
You may as well rise and be going now.

So, having walked for a few steps, you fall
Bodily on the grass under the sun,
And listen to the rustle, one by one,
Of the trees' leaves; and soon the wind has done
For a short space, and it is quiet all;

Except because the rooks will make a caw
Just now and then together: and the breeze
Soon rises up again among the trees,
Making the grass, moreover, bend and tease
Your face, but pleasantly. Mayhap the paw

Of a dog touches you and makes you rise
Upon one arm to pat him; and he licks
Your hand for that. A child is throwing sticks,
Hard by, at some half-dozen cows, which fix
Upon him their unmoved contented eyes.

The sun's heat now is painful. Scarce can you
Move, and even less lie still. You shuffle then,
Poised on your arms, again to shade. Again
There comes a pleasant laxness on you. When
You have done enough of nothing, you will go.

Some hours perhaps have passed. Say not you fling
These hours or such-like recklessly away.
Seeing the grass and sun and children, say,
Is not this something more than idle play,
Than careless waste? Is it a little thing?

The Light beyond.

I.

Though we may brood with keenest subtlety,
  Sending our reason forth, like Noah's dove,
  To know why we are here to die, hate, love,
With Hope to lead and help our eyes to see
Through labour daily in dim mystery,
  Like those who in dense theatre and hall,
  When fire breaks out or weight-strained rafters fall,
Towards some egress struggle doubtfully;
Though we through silent midnight may address
  The mind to many a speculative page,
Yearning to solve our wrongs and wretchedness,
Yet duty and wise passiveness are won,—
  (So it hath been and is from age to age)—
Though we be blind, by doubting not the sun.

II.

Bear on to death serenely, day by day,
  Midst losses, gains, toil, and monotony,
  The ignorance of social apathy,
And artifice which men to men display:
Like one who tramps a long and lonely way
  Under the constant rain's inclemency,
  With vast clouds drifting in obscurity,
And sudden lightnings in the welkin grey.
To-morrow may be bright with healthy pleasure,
  Banishing discontents and vain defiance:
The pearly clouds will pass to a slow measure,
  Wayfarers walk the dusty road in joyance,
  The wide heaths spread far in the sun's alliance,
Among the furze inviting us to leisure.

III.

Vanity, say they, quoting him of old.
  Yet, if full knowledge lifted us serene
  To look beyond mortality's stern screen,
A reconciling vision could be told,
Brighter than western clouds or shapes of gold
  That change in amber fires,—or the demesne
  Of ever mystic sleep. Mists intervene,
Which then would melt, to show our eyesight bold
From God a perfect chain throughout the skies,
  Like Jacob's ladder light with winged men.
And as this world, all notched to terrene eyes
  With Alpine ranges, smoothes to higher ken,
So death and sin and social miseries;
  By God fixed as His bow o'er moor and fen.

The Blessed Damozel.

The blessed Damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven:
Her blue grave eyes were deeper much
Than a deep water, even.
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift
On the neck meetly worn;
And her hair, lying down her back,
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To *one* it is ten years of years:
..... Yet now, here in this place
Surely she leaned o'er me,—her hair
Fell all about my face.....
Nothing: the Autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the terrace of God's house
That she was standing on,—
By God built over the sheer depth
In which Space is begun;
So high, that looking downward thence,
She could scarce see the sun.

It lies from Heaven across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and blackness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

But in those tracts, with her, it was
  The peace of utter light
And silence. For no breeze may stir
  Along the steady flight
Of seraphim; no echo there,
  Beyond all depth or height.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends,
  Playing at holy games,
Spake, gentle-mouthed, among themselves,
  Their virginal chaste names;
And the souls, mounting up to God,
  Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself, and stooped
  Into the vast waste calm;
Till her bosom's pressure must have made
  The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
  Along her bended arm.

From the fixt lull of heaven, she saw
  Time, like a pulse, shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove,
  In that steep gulph, to pierce
The swarm: and then she spake, as when
  The stars sang in their spheres.

"I wish that he were come to me,
  For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in solemn heaven?
  On earth, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
  And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
  And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand, and go with him
  To the deep wells of light,
And we will step down as to a stream
  And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
  Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps tremble continually
  With prayer sent up to God;
And where each need, revealed, expects
  Its patient period.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Sometimes is felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him—
I myself, lying so,—
The songs I sing here; which his mouth
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
Finding some knowledge at each pause
And some new thing to know."

(Alas! to *her* wise simple mind
These things were all but known
Before: they trembled on her sense,—
Her voice had caught their tone.
Alas for lonely Heaven! Alas
For life wrung out alone!

Alas, and though the end were reached?.....
Was *thy* part understood
Or borne in trust? And for her sake
Shall this too be found good?—
May the close lips that knew not prayer
Praise ever, though they would?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies:—
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

"Circle-wise sit they, with bound locks
And bosoms covered;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame,
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear haply, and be dumb.
Then I will lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel—the unnumber'd solemn heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And Angels, meeting us, shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
To have more blessing than on earth
In nowise; but to be
As then we were,—being as then
At peace. Yea, verily.

"Yea, verily; when he is come
We will do thus and thus:
Till this my vigil seem quite strange
And almost fabulous;
We two will live at once, one life;
And peace shall be with us."

She gazed, and listened, and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild:
"All this is when he comes." She ceased;
The light thrilled past her, filled
With Angels, in strong level lapse.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their flight
Was vague 'mid the poised spheres.
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

Reviews.

The Strayed Reveller; and other Poems. By A.—Fellowes, Ludgate-street.—1849.

If any one quality may be considered common to all living poets, it is that which we have heard aptly described as *self-consciousness*. In this many appear to see the only permanent trace of the now old usurping deluge of Byronism; but it is truly a fact of the time, —less a characteristic than a portion of it. Every species of composition—the dramatic, the narrative, the lyric, the didactic, the descriptive—is imbued with this spirit; and the reader may calculate with almost equal certainty on becoming acquainted with the belief of a poet as of a theologian or a moralist. Of the evils resulting from the practice, the most annoying and the worst is that some of the lesser poets, and all mere pretenders, in their desire to emulate the really great, feel themselves under a kind of obligation to assume opinions, vague, incongruous, or exaggerated, often not only not their own, but the direct reverse of their own,—a kind of meanness that has replaced, and goes far to compensate for, the flatteries of our literary ancestors. On the other hand, this quality has created a new tie of interest between the author and his public, enhances the significance of great works, and confers value on even the slightest productions of a true poet.

That the systematic infusion of this spirit into the drama and epic compositions is incompatible with strict notions of art will scarcely be disputed: but such a general objection does not apply in the case of lyric poetry, where even the character of the subject is optional. It is an instance of this kind that we are now about to consider.

"The Strayed Reveller and other Poems," constitutes, we believe, the first published poetical work of its author, although the following would rather lead to the inference that he is no longer young.

> "But my youth reminds me: 'Thou
> Hast lived light as these live now;
> As these are, thou too wert such.'"—p. 59.

And, in another poem:

> "In vain, all, all, in vain,
> They beat upon mine ear again,
> Those melancholy tones so sweet and still:
> Those lute-like tones which, in long-distant years,
> Did steal into mine ears."—p. 86.

Accordingly, we find but little passion in the volume, only four

pieces (for "The Strayed Reveller" can scarcely be so considered) being essentially connected with it. Of these the "Modern Sappho" appears to us not only inferior, but as evidencing less maturity both of thought and style; the second, "Stagyrus," is an urgent appeal to God; the third, "The New Sirens," though passionate in utterance, is, in purpose, a rejection of passion, as having been weighed in the balance and found wanting; and, in the last, where he tells of the voice which once

> "Blew such a thrilling summons to his will,
> Yet could not shake it;
> Drained all the life his full heart had to spill;
> Yet could not break it:"—

he records the "intolerable change of thought" with which it now comes to his "long-sobered heart." Perhaps "The Forsaken Merman" should be added to these; but the grief here is more nearly approaching to gloomy submission and the sickness of hope deferred.

The lessons that the author would learn of nature are, as set forth in the sonnet that opens the volume,

> "Of toil unsevered from tranquillity;
> Of labor that in one short hour outgrows
> Man's noisy schemes,—accomplished in repose,
> Too great for haste, too high for rivalry."—p. 1.

His conception of the poet is of one who

> "Sees before him life unroll,
> A placid and continuous whole;
> That general life which does not cease;
> Whose secret is, not joy, but peace;
> That life, whose dumb wish is not missed
> If birth proceeds, if things subsist;
> The life of plants and stones and rain;
> The life he craves:—if not in vain
> Fate gave, what chance shall not control,
> His sad lucidity of soul."—pp. 123-4. (*Resignation.*)

Such is the author's purpose in these poems. He recognises in each thing a part of the whole: and the poet must know even as he sees, or breathes, as by a spontaneous, half-passive exercise of a faculty: he must receive rather than seek.

> "Action and suffering tho' he know,
> He hath not lived, if he lives so."

Connected with this view of life as "a placid and continuous whole," is the principle which will be found here manifested in

different modes, and thro' different phases of event, of the permanence and changelessness of natural laws, and of the large necessity wherewith they compel life and man. This is the thought which animates the "Fragment of an 'Antigone:'" "The World and the Quietest" has no other scope than this:—

"Critias, long since, I know,
(For fate decreed it so),
Long since the world hath set its heart to live.
Long since, with credulous zeal,
It turns life's mighty wheel:
Still doth for laborers send;
Who still their labor give.
And still expects an end."—p. 109.

This principle is brought a step further into the relations of life in "The Sick King in Bokhara," the following passage from which claims to be quoted, not less for its vividness as description, than in illustration of this thought:—

"In vain, therefore, with wistful eyes
Gazing up hither, the poor man
Who loiters by the high-heaped booths
Below there in the Registan
"Says: 'Happy he who lodges there!
With silken raiment, store of rice,
And, for this drought, all kinds of fruits,
Grape-syrup, squares of colored ice,
"'With cherries served in drifts of snow.'
In vain hath a king power to build
Houses, arcades, enamelled mosques,
And to make orchard-closes filled
"With curious fruit trees brought from far,
With cisterns for the winter rain;
And, in the desert, spacious inns
In divers places;—if that pain
"Is not more lightened which he feels,
If his will be not satisfied:
And that it be not from all time
The law is planted, to abide."—pp. 47-8.

The author applies this basis of fixity in nature generally to the rules of man's nature, and avows himself a Quietist. Yet he would not despond, but contents himself, and waits. In no poem of the volume is this character more clearly defined and developed than in the sonnets "To a Republican Friend," the first of which expresses

concurrence in certain broad progressive principles of humanity : to the second we would call the reader's attention, as to an example of the author's more firm and serious writing :—

"Yet when I muse on what life is, I seem
Rather to patience prompted than that proud
Prospect of hope which France proclaims so loud ;
France, famed in all great arts, in none supreme :—
Seeing this vale, this earth whereon we dream,
Is on all sides o'ershadowed by the high
Uno'erleaped mountains of necessity,
Sparing us narrower margin than we deem.
Nor will that day dawn at a human nod,
When, bursting thro' the net-work superposed
By selfish occupation—plot and plan,
Lust, avarice, envy,—liberated man,
All difference with his fellow-man composed,
Shall be left standing face to face with God."—p. 57.

In the adjuration entitled "Stagyrus," already mentioned, he prays to be set free

"From doubt, where all is double,
Where Faiths are built on dust ;"

and there seems continually recurring to him a haunting presage of the unprofitableness of the life, after which men have not "any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." Where he speaks of resignation, after showing how the less impetuous and self-concentred natures can acquiesce in the order of this life, even were it to bring them back with an end unattained to the place whence they set forth ; after showing how it is the poet's office to live rather than to act in and thro' the whole life round about him, he concludes thus :

"The world in which we live and move
Outlasts aversion, outlasts love. . . . .
Nay, and since death, which wipes out man,
Finds him with many an unsolved plan, ...
Still gazing on the ever full
Eternal mundane spectacle,
This world in which we draw our breath
In some sense, Fausta, outlasts death. . . . .

Enough, we live :—and, if a life
With large results so little rife,

Tho' bearable, seem scarcely worth
This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth,
Yet, Fausta, the mute turf we tread,
The solemn hills around us spread,
This stream that falls incessantly,
The strange-scrawled rocks, the lonely sky,
If I might lend their life a voice,
Seem to bear rather than rejoice.
And, even could the intemperate prayer
Man iterates, while these forbear,
For movement, for an ampler sphere,
Pierce fate's impenetrable ear,
Not milder is the general lot
Because our spirits have forgot,
In action's dizzying eddy whirled,
The something that infects the world."—pp. 125-8.—
Resignation.

"Shall we," he asks, "go hence and find that our vain dreams are not dead? Shall we follow our vague joys, and the old dead faces, and the dead hopes?"

He exhorts man to be "*in utrumque paratus.*" If the world be the materialized thought of one all-pure, let him, "by lonely pureness," seek his way through the colored dream of life up again to that all-pure fount:—

"But, if the wild unfathered mass no birth
In divine seats hath known;
In the blank echoing solitude, if earth,
Rocking her obscure body to and fro,
Ceases not from all time to heave and groan,
Unfruitful oft, and, at her happiest throe,
Forms what she forms, alone:"

then man, the only self-conscious being, "seeming sole to awake," must, recognizing his brotherhood with this world which stirs at his feet unknown, confess that he too but seems.

Thus far for the scheme and the creed of the author. Concerning these we leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Before proceeding to a more minute notice of the various poems, we would observe that a predilection is apparent throughout for antiquity and classical association; not that strong love which made Shelley, as it were, the heir of Plato; not that vital grasp of conception which enabled Keats without, and enables Landor with, the most intimate knowledge of form and detail, to return to and renew

the old thoughts and beliefs of Greece; still less the mere superficial acquaintance with names and hackneyed attributes which was once poetry. Of this conventionalism, however, we have detected two instances; the first, an allusion to "shy Dian's horn" in "breathless glades" of the days we live, peculiarly inappropriate in a sonnet addressed "To George Cruikshank on his Picture of 'The Bottle;'" the second a grave call to Memory to bring her tablets, occurring in, and forming the burden of, a poem strictly personal, and written for a particular occasion. But the author's partiality is shown, exclusively of such poems as "Mycerinus" and "The Strayed Reveller," where the subjects are taken from antiquity, rather in the framing than in the ground work, as in the titles "A Modern Sappho," "The New Sirens," "Stagyrus," and "*In utrumque paratus.*" It is Homer and Epictetus and Sophocles who "prop his mind;" the immortal air which the poet breathes is

"Where Orpheus and where Homer are;"

and he addresses "Fausta" and "Critias."

There are four narrative poems in the volume:—"Mycerinus," "The Strayed Reveller," "The Sick King in Bokhara," and "The Forsaken Merman." The first of these, the only one altogether narrative in form, founded on a passage in the 2nd Book of Herodotus, is the story of the six years of life portioned to a King of Egypt succeeding a father "who had loved injustice, and lived long;" and tells how he who had "loved the good" revels out his "six drops of time." He takes leave of his people with bitter words, and goes out

"To the cool regions of the groves he loved . . . . . .
Here came the king holding high feast at morn,
Rose-crowned; and ever, when the sun went down,
A hundred lamps beamed in the tranquil gloom,
From tree to tree, all thro' the twinkling grove,
Revealing all the tumult of the feast,
Flushed guests, and golden goblets foamed with wine;
While the deep-burnished foliage overhead
Splintered the silver arrows of the moon."—p. 7.

(a daring image, verging towards a conceit, though not absolutely such, and the only one of that character that has struck us in the volume.)

"So six long years he revelled, night and day:
And, when the mirth waxed loudest, with dull sound
Sometimes from the grove's centre echoes came,
To tell his wondering people of their king;

In the still night, across the steaming flats,
Mixed with the murmur of the moving Nile."—pp. 8, 9.

Here a Tennysonian influence is very perceptible, more especially in the last quotation; and traces of the same will be found in "The Forsaken Merman."

In this poem the story is conveyed by allusions and reminiscences whilst the Merman makes his children call after her who had returned to her own earth, hearing the Easter bells over the bay, and who is not yet come back for all the voices calling "Margaret! Margaret!" The piece is scarcely long enough or sufficiently distinct otherwise than as a whole to allow of extract; but we cannot but express regret that a poem far from common-place either in subject or treatment should conclude with such sing-song as

—— "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she;
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

"The Strayed Reveller" is written without rhyme—(not being blank verse, however,)—and not unfrequently, it must be admitted, without rhythm. Witness the following lines:

"Down the dark valley—I saw."—
"Trembling, I entered; beheld"—
"Thro' the islands some divine bard."—

Nor are these by any means the only ones that might be cited in proof; and, indeed, even where there is nothing precisely contrary to rhythm, the verse might, generally speaking, almost be read as prose. Seldom indeed, as it appears to us, is the attempt to write without some fixed laws of metrical construction attended with success; never, perhaps, can it be considered as the most appropriate embodiment of thought. The fashion has obtained of late years; but it is a fashion, and will die out. But few persons will doubt the superiority of the established blank verse, after reading the following passage, or will hesitate in pronouncing that it ought to be the rule, instead of the exception, in this poem:

"They see the merchants
On the Oxus stream:—but care
Must visit first them too, and make them pale:
Whether, thro' whirling sand,
A cloud of desert robber-horse has burst
Upon their caravan; or greedy kings,
In the walled cities the way passes thro',

Crushed them with tolls ; or fever airs
On some great river's marge
Mown them down, far from home."—p. 25.

The Reveller, going to join the train of Bacchus in his temple, has strayed into the house of Circe and has drunk of her cup: he believes that, while poets can see and know only through participation in endurance, he shares the power belonging to the gods of seeing "without pain, without labour;" and has looked over the valley all day long at the Mœnads and Fauns, and Bacchus, "sometimes, for a moment, passing through the dark stems." Apart from the inherent defects of the metre, there is great beauty of pictorial description in some passages of the poem, from which the following (where he is speaking of the gods) may be taken as a specimen :—

"They see the Indian
Drifting, knife in hand,
His frail boat moored to
A floating isle, thick-matted
With large-leaved low-creeping melon plants,
And the dark cucumber.
He reaps and stows them,
Drifting—drifting :—round him,
Round his green harvest-plot,
Flow the cool lake-waves :
The mountains ring them."—p. 20.

From "the Sick King in Bokhara," we have already quoted at some length. It is one of the most considerable, and perhaps, as being the most simple and life-like, the best of the narrative poems. A vizier is receiving the dues from the cloth merchants, when he is summoned to the presence of the king, who is ill at ease, by Hussein ; "a teller of sweet tales." Arrived, Hussein is desired to relate the cause of the king's sickness ; and he tells how, three days since, a certain Moollah came before the king's path, calling for justice on himself, whom, deemed a fool or a drunkard, the guards pricked off with their spears, while the king passed on into the mosque : and how the man came on the morrow with yesterday's blood-spots on him, and cried out for right. What follows is told with great singleness and truth : "Thou knowest," the man says,

"'How fierce
In these last days the sun hath burned ;
That the green water in the tanks
Is to a putrid puddle turned ;
And the canal that from the stream
Of Samarcand is brought this way
Wastes and runs thinner every day.

" 'Now I at nightfall had gone forth
Alone; and, in a darksome place
Under some mulberry-trees, I found
A little pool; and, in brief space,
With all the water that was there
I filled my pitcher, and stole home
Unseen; and, having drink to spare,
I hid the can behind the door,
And went up on the roof to sleep.

" 'But, in the night, which was with wind
And burning dust, again I creep
Down, having fever, for a drink.

" 'Now, meanwhile, had my brethren found
The water-pitcher, where it stood
Behind the door upon the ground,
And called my mother: and they all,
As they were thirsty and the night
Most sultry, drained the pitcher there;
That they sat with it in my sight,
Their lips still wet, when I came down.

" 'Now mark: I, being fevered, sick,
(Most unblessed also,) at that sight
Brake forth and cursed them. Dost thou hear?
One was my mother. Now, do right.'

"But my lord mused a space, and said,
'Send him away, sirs, and make on.
It is some madman,' the king said.
As the king said, so was it done.

"The morrow at the self-same hour,
In the king's path, behold, the man,
Not kneeling, sternly fixed. He stood
Right opposite, and thus began,

Frowning grim down: 'Thou wicked king,
Most deaf where thou shouldst most give ear;
What? Must I howl in the next world,
Because thou wilt not listen here?

" 'What, wilt thou pray and get thee grace,
And all grace shall to me be grudged?
Nay but, I swear, from this thy path
I will not stir till I be judged.'

"Then they who stood about the king
Drew close together and conferred;
Till that the king stood forth and said:
'Before the priests thou shalt be heard.'

"But, when the Ulema were met
And the thing heard, they doubted not;
But sentenced him, as the law is,
To die by stoning on the spot.

"Now the king charged us secretly:
'Stoned must he be: the law stands so:
Yet, if he seek to fly, give way;
Forbid him not, but let him go.'

"So saying, the king took a stone,
And cast it softly: but the man,
With a great joy upon his face,
Kneeled down, and cried not, neither ran.

"So they whose lot it was cast stones,
That they flew thick and bruised him sore:
But he praised Allah with loud voice,
And remained kneeling as before.

"My lord had covered up his face:
But, when one told him, 'He is dead;'
Turning him quickly to go in,
'Bring thou to me his corpse,' he said.

"And truly, while I speak, oh king,
I hear the bearers on the stair.
Wilt thou they straightway bring him in?—
Ho! enter ye who tarry there."—pp. 39-43.

The Vizier counsels the king that each man's private grief suffices him, and that he should not seek increase of it in the griefs of other men. But he answers him, (this passage we have before quoted,) that the king's lot and the poor man's is the same, for that neither has his will; and he takes order that the dead man be buried in his own royal tomb.

We know few poems the style of which is more unaffectedly without labor, and to the purpose, than this. The metre, however, of the earlier part is not always quite so uniform and intelligible as might be desired; and we must protest against the use, for the sake of rhyme, of *broke* in lieu of *broken*, as also of *stole* for *stolen* in "the New Sirens." While on the subject of style, we may instance, from the "Fragment of an Antigone," the following uncouth stanza, which, at the first reading, hardly appears to be correctly put together:

"But hush! Hœmon, whom Antigone,
Robbing herself of life in burying,
Against Creon's laws, Polynices,
Robs of a loved bride, pale, imploring,
Waiting her passage,
Forth from the palace hitherward comes."—p. 30.

Perhaps the most perfect and elevated in tone of all these poems is "The New Sirens." The author addresses, in imagination, a company of fair women, one of whose train he had been at morning; but in the evening he has dreamed under the cedar shade, and seen the same forms "on shores and sea-washed places,"

"With blown tresses, and with beckoning hands."

He thinks how at sunrise he had beheld those ladies playing between the vines; but now their warm locks have fallen down over their arms. He prays them to speak and shame away his sadness; but there comes only a broken gleaming from their windows, which

"Reels and shivers on the ruffled gloom."

He asks them whether they have seen the end of all this, the load of passion and the emptiness of reaction, whether they dare look at life's latter days,

"When a dreary light is wading
Thro' this waste of sunless greens,
When the flashing lights are fading
On the peerless cheek of queens,
When the mean shall no more sorrow,
And the proudest no more smile;
While the dawning of the morrow
Widens slowly westward all that while?"

And he implores them to "let fall one tear, and set him free." The past was no mere pretence; it was true while it lasted; but it is gone now, and the East is white with day. Shall they meet again, only that he may ask whose blank face that is?

"Pluck, pluck cypress, oh pale maidens;
Dusk the hall with yew."

This poem must be read as a whole; for not only would it be difficult to select particular passages for extraction, but such extracts, if made, would fail in producing any adequate impression.

We have already quoted so largely from the concluding piece, "Resignation," that it may here be necessary to say only that it is in the form of speech held with "Fausta" in retracing, after a lapse of ten years, the same way they had once trod with a joyful

company. The tone is calm and sustained, not without touches of familiar truth.

The minor poems comprise eleven sonnets, among which, those "To the Duke of Wellington, on hearing him mispraised," and on "Religious Isolation," deserve mention; and it is with pleasure we find one, in the tenor of strong appreciation, written on reading the Essays of the great American, Emerson. The sonnet for "Butler's Sermons" is more indistinct, and, as such, less to be approved, in imagery than is usual with this poet. That "To an Independent Preacher who preached that we should be in harmony with nature," seems to call for some remark. The sonnet ends with these words:

> "Man must begin, know this, where nature ends;
> Nature and man can never be fast friends;
> Fool, if thou canst not pass her, rest her slave."

Now, as far as this sonnet shows of the discourse which occasioned it, we cannot see anything so absurd in that discourse; and where the author confutes the Independent preacher by arguing that

> "Nature is cruel; man is sick of blood:
> Nature is stubborn; man would fain adore:
> Nature is fickle; man hath need of rest:"

we cannot but think that, by attributing to nature a certain human degree of qualities, which will not suffice for man, he loses sight of the point really raised: for is not man's nature only a part of nature? and, if a part, necessary to the completeness of the whole? and should not the individual, avoiding a factitious life, order himself in conformity with his own rule of being? And, indeed, the author himself would converse with the self-sufficing progress of nature, with its rest in action, as distinguished from the troublous vexation of man's toiling:—

> "Two lessons, Nature, let me learn of thee,
> Two lessons that in every wind are blown;
> Two blending duties harmonised in one,
> Tho' the loud world proclaim their enmity."—p. 1.

The short lyric poem, "To Fausta" has a Shelleian spirit and grace in it. "The Hayswater Boat" seems a little *got up*, and is scarcely positive enough. This remark applies also, and in a stronger degree, to the "Stanzas on a Gipsy Child," which, and the "Modern Sappho," previously mentioned, are the pieces least to our taste in the volume. There is a something about them of drawing-room sentimentality; and they might almost, without losing much save in size, be compressed into poems of the class commonly set to music. It is rather the basis of thought than the writing of the "Gipsy Child,"

which affords cause for objection; nevertheless, there is a passage in which a comparison is started between this child and a "Seraph in an alien planet born,"—an idea not new, and never, as we think, worth much; for it might require some subtlety to show how a planet capable of producing a Seraph should be alien from that Seraph.

We may here notice a few cases of looseness, either of thought or of expression, to be met with in these pages; a point of style to be particularly looked to when the occurrence or the absence of such forms one very sensible difference between the first-rate and the second-rate poets of the present times.

Thus, in the sonnet "Shakspear," the conclusion says,

> "All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
> All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
> Find their sole *voice* in that victorious brow;"

whereas a brow's voice remains to be uttered: nor, till the nature of the victory gained by the brow shall have been pointed out, are we able to hazard an opinion of the precise value of the epithet.

In the address to George Cruikshank, we find: "Artist, whose hand with horror *winged*;" where a similar question arises; and, returning to the "Gipsy Child," we are struck with the unmeaningness of the line:

"Who massed round that slight brow these clouds of doom?"

Nor does the following, from the first of the sonnets, "To a Republican Friend," appear reconcileable with any ideas of appropriateness:

> —— "While before me *flow*
> The *armies* of the homeless and unfed."

It is but right to state that the only instance of the kind we remember throughout the volume have now been mentioned.

To conclude. Our extracts will enable the reader to judge of this Poet's style: it is clear and comprehensive, and eschews flowery adornment. No particular model has been followed, though that general influence which Tennyson exercises over so many writers of this generation may be traced here as elsewhere. It may be said that the author has little, if anything, to unlearn. Care and consistent arrangement, and the necessary subordination of the parts to the whole, are evident throughout; the reflective, which appears the more essential form of his thought, does not absorb the due observation or presentment of the outward facts of nature; and a well-poised and serious mind shows itself in every page.

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